



Weekly Activity Update

February 12 – February 19 • Issue 75

Strengthening the Government: Media

Fourth Women-managed Radio Station Launched

In partnership with the Institute for Media, Policy, and Civil Society (IMPAS), a Canadian NGO, USAID officially launched a fourth community FM radio station managed entirely by Afghan women. The launch of Radio Quyaash in Maimana, Faryab Province, was a high-profile event, drawing such participants as USAID/Afghanistan Mission Director Patrick Fine, the Canadian Ambassador, the Deputy Minister of Information and Culture, and the Governor of Faryab. The station had been operating prior to its official launch and has progressed rapidly: on air for less than three months, Radio Quyaash is already lining up commercial advertising clients, initiating new programming ideas, educating the public on health and hygiene issues, and providing the community with a new venue for local opinion and ideas to be publicly expressed. Several objectives are accomplished through this media project: empowering women, educating the public on health issues, and enhancing public information capacity for all sectors.



USAID/Afghanistan Mission Director Patrick Fine and Canadian Ambassador Chris Alexandre open Radio Quyaash

Creating Conditions for Stability: Healthcare

Increasing Access to Basic Health Care

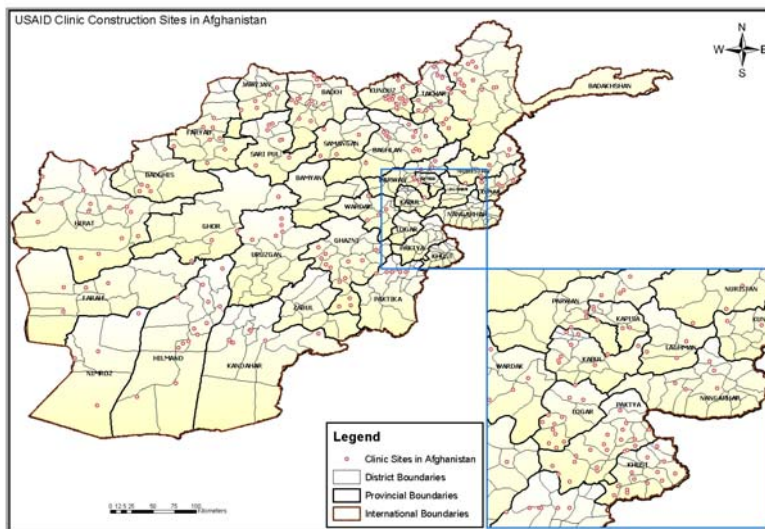
As part of its overall objective to create conditions for stability, USAID is increasing access to basic health care by expanding both the health care system and its supporting infrastructure. USAID's Rural Expansion of Afghanistan's Community-based Healthcare (REACH) program delivers quality health services, provides health training and education, and builds capacity in the health sector to ensure Afghan ownership and long-term sustainability. Through local NGO grants, the REACH program has provided support to 322 health facilities. Every month, an average of 989 patients, 70% of whom are women and children under the age of five, are served at each facility. The program coordinated the sale of more than



Under REACH, Afghan girls receive water treatment products and training

150,000 bottles of locally produced and bottled Clorin, providing 150 million liters of safe drinking water. In addition, 2,000 Community Health Care Workers have been trained and are actively practicing; approximately 1,000 more are currently undergoing training. REACH supports the Ministry of Public Health (MOPH) through policy development assistance, development of a Health Management Information System, and technical assistance via multiple MOPH working groups and task forces.

To support the expansion of healthcare services, USAID is building the necessary infrastructure. Twenty-five clinics have been constructed, and an additional 215 are underway. Record snowfall, however, has significantly slowed the rate of clinic construction.



USAID United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Afghanistan, 14 Feb. 2005

Disaster Declaration for Severe Winter Weather

Unusually heavy snowfall and low temperatures over the past three weeks have led to increasing reports of outbreaks of epidemic disease, food insecurity, and deaths from exposure in many provinces of Afghanistan. Heavy snows continue to fall across much of the country, closing most major highways and blocking access to provincial capitals and districts. The Government of Afghanistan (GOA) convened an emergency response group on February 5 to coordinate response to the situation and request international assistance. USAID is participating in these meetings. During the latest emergency response group meeting, held February 10, the GOA reported that the most seriously affected provinces are Bamyan, Badakhshan, Parwan, Daikundi, Ghazni, Ghor, Logar, Baghlan, Uruzgan and Zabul. Internally displaced persons (IDP) and returned refugees in Kabul, Mazar-e Sharif and Kandahar are also facing serious effects of the harsh weather. While winter emergency needs may continue over coming weeks, the threat of heavy flooding is also of serious concern. Assistance from USAID's Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance (OFDA) has been requested in responding to the disaster and relief is being mobilized.

Security Incidents

Note: Hostile attacks are reported through USAID's security contractors and the Associated Press

- **Number of Hostile Attacks:** During this reporting period (February 7 – February 17), there were six hostile attacks, none resulting in injury. There was one casualty - the body of a missing Uzbek national working for an international organization was found in Faryab province.
- **USAID Related:** During this reporting period, there was only one hostile attack on USAID related projects and/or staff.
- **Latest Attack:** At approximately 0300 on February 12, a USAID-funded school in Lashkar Gah, Helmand province, was burned. The Louis Berger Group, in conjunction with an Afghan construction company, was constructing the school. There were no injuries, as the incident occurred overnight. Two of the five units of the school were burned. Currently, there are no leads for motive or suspects, but further investigations are underway. Initial reporting suggests that the villagers were uniformly happy with the school construction project and there had not been any disgruntled construction employees.



Burned USAID-funded school in Lashkar Gah, Helmand Province

